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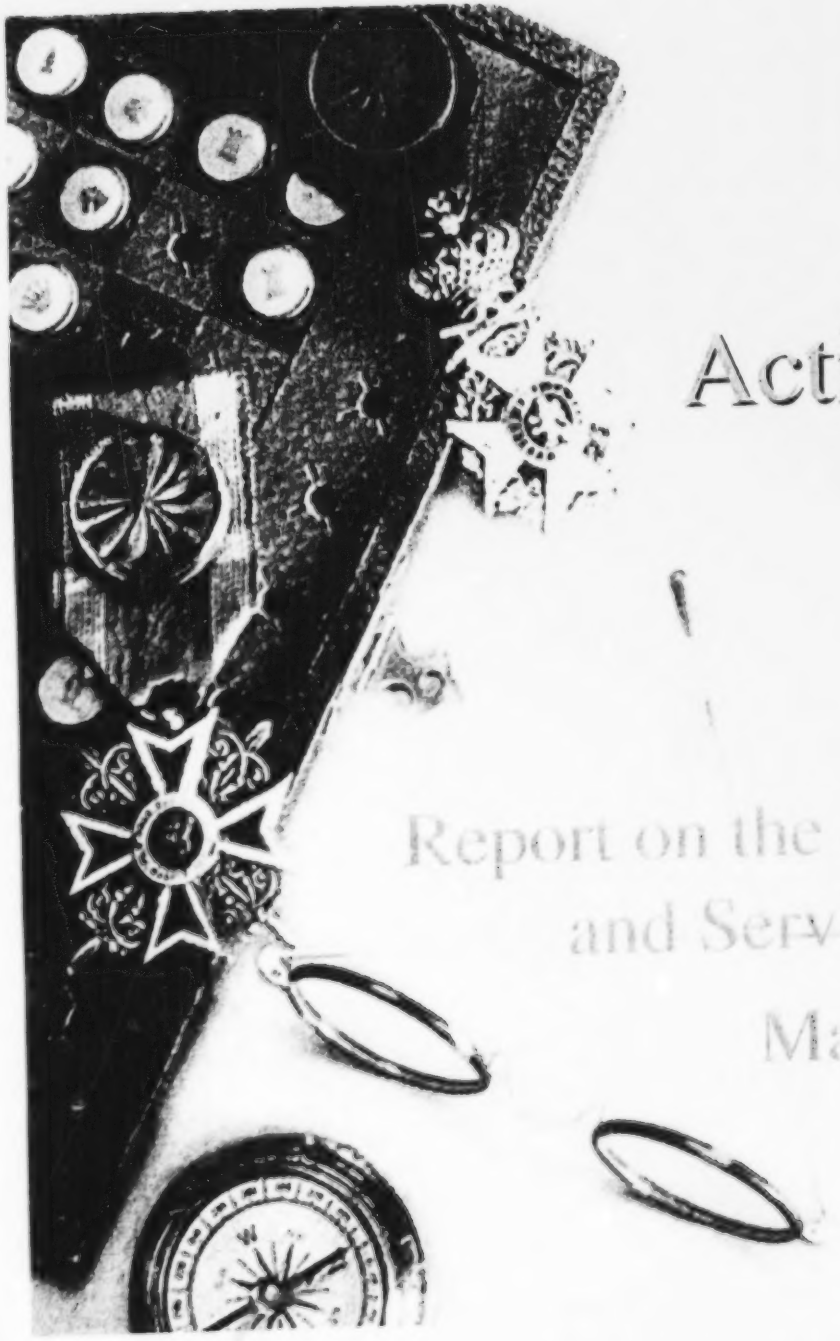

Action Plan

Report on the Review of Programs and Services for Seniors

March 2002

Recommendation	Planned Action	Completion Date	Lead Responsibility
Recommendation 1 – Org. and Admin. of Programs The Working Group recommends that the GNWT identify options for organizing and administering seniors' programs within government, including:: 1.1 1.1 The feasibility and implications of establishing a single point of entry at the community level, through technology and/or physical location; 1.2 1.2 The feasibility and implications for consolidating all or some seniors' programs into one administrative unit; 1.3 1.3 The feasibility and implications of establishing a universal identification card and a single application form for seniors' programs.	1.1 Identify single point of entry including co-location of programs and services at the community level. 1.2 Reject recommendation 1.2 in favour of coordinating committee (see recommendation #3) 1.3 Develop options to establish a universal identification system.	September 2002 December 2002 December 2002	Interdepartmental Committee for Seniors programs reporting to Deputy Minister HSS/ Seniors
Recommendation 2 – Coord. at the community level The Working Group recommends that, where practical in a community, GNWT departments work in conjunction with appropriate organizations and service providers in communities in the NWT, and establish community seniors' coordinating committees with the mandate of providing better inter-departmental and agency coordination and services to seniors. The committees would meet as required, to discuss issues of importance to seniors in the community. The committees would be chaired by a rep from HSS. Any reports, information or recommended actions arising from the work of the community seniors' planning committees would be forwarded to GNWT departments and to appropriate community organizations and local governments.	2.1 Implement committees in communities interested in establishing seniors' coordinating committees in conjunction with the NWT Seniors' Society and specific community organizations, as appropriate	September 2002	Health and Social Services
Recommendation 3 - Departmental coordination The Working Group recommends that the GNWT strengthen the interdepartmental approach through the Minister Responsible for Seniors by establishing a committee of officials for seniors' programs and services. The mandate of the committee is to ensure that seniors' prgm's and services are coordinated across the GNWT and that an inter-departmental approach is used by staff when addressing cross government seniors' issues and programs.	3.1 Establish committee with participating departments: Executive; Health and Social Services; Education, Culture and Employment; Municipal and Community Affairs; NWT Housing Corporation & NWT Seniors' Society. 3.2 Develop terms of reference for the Committee.	June 2002	Health and Social Services Interdepartmental Committee on Seniors' programs
Recommendation 4 - Seniors' Forum The Working Group recommends the GNWT support the organization of a 'Seniors' Forum' once during the term of each assembly	4.1 GNWT and NWT Seniors Society work together to identify appropriate time and agenda for innual Seniors' Forum	June , 2002	Health and Social Services

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Recommendation 5 - Review of programs and services The Working Group recommends that the GNWT conduct a comprehensive review of Seniors' Programs and Services once during the term of each Assembly & prior to the Seniors' Forum.	5.1 GNWT and NWT Seniors Society work together to identify initial year to commence next review date, including Terms of Reference for future reviews	June 2002	Minister Responsible for Seniors
Recommendation 6 - Income assessment The Working Group recommends that based on the outcomes of the Public Housing-Income Assistance Harmonization Project, departments adopt standard criteria for assessing and determining eligibility for government programs. The Working Group further recommends that a scale of graduated benefits be adapted for GNWT income tested seniors' programs, where appropriate.	6.1 Examine existing program standards for income assessment and set guidelines to be used across relevant departments 6.2 Review existing programs which contain income assessment criteria and determine where changes can be made to meet the standards.	October 2002 October 2002	Interdepartmental Committee on Seniors' programs
Recommendation 7 - Standardized age of eligibility The Working Group recognizes that Seniors have requested that the age of 60 should become the standard age for accessing all GNWT programs and services for Seniors. The Working Group also recognizes that significant cost implications could result from standardizing all programs to age 60. Based on the analysis detailed in this report, the Working Group recommends the GNWT not lower the age of eligibility to 60 years, in the following programs: Seniors Citizens Supplementary Benefit; Seniors Property Tax Rebate; and Motor Vehicle Licensing.	No further action required	N/A.	N/A

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Recommendation 8 – Consolidation of income support programs The Working Group recommends that the GNWT complete the analysis for the proposal to consolidate all income-tested financial supports into one single payment and administration system.	8.1 Complete the analysis and make recommendations to Cabinet with respect to consolidation of income tested financial supports.	December 2002	Education, Culture and Employment
Recommendation 9 - Inflation The Working Group recommends that income thresholds for seniors' financial/income supports reflect differences within the NWT in the Cost of Living, and cost increases due to inflation, by adjusting periodically to the Consumer Price Index. The Seniors Citizens' Supplementary Benefit will be included in these periodic adjustments.	9.1 Develop annual schedule for review of inflationary pressures on financial/income supports	July 2002	Interdepartmental Committee on Seniors' programs
Recommendation 10 – Adequacy of Income The Working Group recommends that the GNWT investigate the adequacy of income for seniors, focusing on: • The immediate financial concerns of seniors in need; • Comparative levels of income and income supports across the country; • Implications of the differences in income among seniors across the NWT including cost of living issues; • Forecasting the levels of retirement income for the next generation of seniors; and *The applicability of adapting other systems or models of income support in the NWT (eg: including minimum or guaranteed income levels)*	10.1 Prepare analysis of current seniors' income and estimates of income levels for future years.	September 2002	Education, Culture and Employment

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Recommendation 11 - Seniors Home Heating Subsidy The Working Group recommends that the Seniors' Home Heating Subsidy be reviewed annually and adjusted to account for length of the heating season by community. Further, the GNWT investigate the merit of consolidating all shelter benefits for residents living in private accommodation, who are deemed in need.	11.1 Review program annually, and explore potential for adjustments based on heating season by community 11.2 Prepare report examining options for consolidating all shelter benefits for seniors living in private accommodation.	March 2003 March 2003	Education, Culture and Employment NWT Housing Corporation
Recommendation 12 - Independent living and Housing Needs The Working Group recommends the GNWT identify a long-term strategy, with public and private sector collaboration, for addressing the supply of Seniors Independent Living options.	12.1 NWT Housing Corporation to examine their Affordable Housing Strategy to ensure that it incorporates Seniors' Independent Living Options.	June 2002	NWT Housing Corporation Health and Social Services
Recommendation 13 – Housing Repair and Maintenance The Working Group recommends that the GNWT improve seniors' awareness of and accessibility to government assisted home repair and maintenance programs and options in order to promote the principle of seniors' independent living. Further, the repair and maintenance programs of the NWTHC be reviewed on a periodic basis.	13.1 Enhance public education and information campaign to outline programs and services available to seniors. 13.2 Establish a regular schedule to review repair and maintenance programs.	September, 2002 June 2002	NWT Housing Corporation
Recommendation 14 - Continuing Care Framework The Working Group recommends that the Continuing Care Framework currently being developed by the GNWT include: Home care: Use of First Nations and Inuit Home and Community Care initiative to enhance Home care services to all NWT residents. This includes the communication of program information and the continued training of home care workers. Long term care: Current and future needs for long term care and respite services to enable the elderly to stay in their homes, or those of their families, for as long as possible.	14.1 Continue to enhance home care programs. Publish educational and communication materials regarding home and community care program activities. 14.2 Complete the long term care needs assessment to identify number of facility beds required, and types of programs needed for the next 5-10 years for inclusion in the Continuing care Framework.	September 2002 April 30, 2002	Health and Social Services

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The cognitively impaired: A program of support for families, spouses, and other persons when the cognitively impaired are living at home. Additionally, the GNWT examine options for housing the cognitively impaired. - Rehabilitation services: Increased access to physiological, occupational and other medical and rehabilitative services and specialists, based on need for all ages. - Palliative care: Develop and provide information, training and support to families, caregivers, and the general public regarding end-of-life issues for all ages.	14. 3 Address rehabilitation services through the service delivery component of the NWT health and Social Services System Action Plan. 14.4 Finalize overall Continuing Care Framework. 14. 5 Train health care workers and other professionals to support families, caregivers, and the general public respecting end-of-life issues.	September, 2002 June 2002 Ongoing	Health and Social Services
Recommendation 15 – Extended Health Benefits The Working Group recommends the GNWT review the benefits currently within the Extended Health Benefits program, and, further, recommends adjustment to the following components of the EHB program, if and when appropriate: • Medical Travel Benefits • Medical Escorts • Medical supplies, devices, and aids	15..1 Examine the needs of seniors in the overall context of the review of Supplemental Health Benefits currently underway.	December, 2002	Health and Social Services

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Recommendation 16 Communication and information The Working Group recommends the GNWT enhance the current approaches departments use to communicate and inform seniors and the public about programs, services, and activities relevant to seniors in the Northwest Territories.	16.1 Establish communications plan for informing seniors and the general public about programs and services. 16.2 Update the Seniors Handbook annually	June, 2002 N/A	Interdepartmental Committee for Seniors' programs
Recommendation 17 - Seniors' database The Working Group recommends that the GNWT support the establishment of a website of seniors' information. The website will include program and service information, demographic information, national linkages, and any relevant information for seniors in the NWT.	17.1 Modify existing website	July 2003	Health and Social Services
Recommendation 18 – Elder Abuse The Working Group acknowledges that abuse of older adults is an issue in the Northwest Territories and recommends that, as a priority, the GNWT support a public awareness campaign to be implemented and delivered in collaboration with the NWT Seniors' Society and/or other appropriate organizations. The public awareness campaign on the abuse of elderly persons in the NWT may include community-based workshops and educational and informational materials. Workshops should be delivered at the readiness and request of the community. The Working Group also suggests that the GNWT specifically include and/or cite the protection of elderly persons in the development of any future Protection Against Family Violence legislation.	18.1 Collaborate with with Department of Health and Social Services regarding the Addictions, Family Violence & Mental Health Framework and incorporate a public awareness campaign involving Elder Abuse. 18.2 Offer training and workshops to community societies on elder abuse in cooperation with the NWT Seniors' Society, at the readiness of communities 18.3 Work with NWT Seniors' society to develop workshop and training criteria	September , 2002 September , 2002 September 2002	Health and Social Services NWT Seniors Society

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Recommendation 19 - Seniors-friendly workshops Knowledge of the lifestyle issues seniors face is a critical piece of the way society in general understands and responds to our elderly population. *Seniors Friendly* educational workshops and information are a way to sensitize and educate the general population to the needs of NWT seniors. The Working Group recommends that the GNWT continue to support the NWT Seniors Society to deliver 'Senior Friendly' workshops, and that the workshops be delivered in the schools of the NWT and within the public and private sectors.	19.1 Work with NWT Seniors' Society to identify specific needs, including resource requirements to offer seniors friendly workshops.	September, 2002	Health and Social Services NWT Seniors Society
Recommendation 20 - Retirement planning Pre-retirement and retirement planning can have a positive influence on the lives of future seniors. As such, the Working Group recommends that the GNWT develop an education and public awareness program focusing on retirement planning issues.	20.1 Develop and distribute public awareness program focusing on retirement planning	March 31, 2003	Interdepartmental Committee for Seniors' programs
Recommendation 21 - Consolidation of toll free lines The Working Group recommends that the GNWT and the NWT Seniors' Society examine the feasibility of consolidating the toll free numbers currently used by Seniors to contact government regarding programs and services.	21.1 Examine the feasibility of consolidating seniors toll-free lines for seniors programs and services	July, 2003	Health and Social Services

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Recommendation 22 – Research The Working Group recommends that the GNWT continue to conduct research into issues affecting seniors programming and quality of life, including but not limited to: - The nature of demographic change in the NWT and its impacts on programming; - Innovative program delivery models; and Other program planning issues requiring	22.1 Identify research plan addressing critical issues and trends affecting seniors in the NWT 22.2 Release Profile For Seniors report on demographics, trends and health needs of NWT seniors	December , 2002 September 2002	Health and Social Services
Recommendation 23 - Program principles The Working Group recommends that the GNWT adopt the principles of the National Framework on Aging (NFA) into a policy framework for seniors' programs and services. - *Dignity*...Being treated with respect, regardless of the situation - *Independence*...Being in control of one's life; being able to do as much for oneself as possible - *Participation*...Getting involved, staying active and taking part in the community - *Fairness*...Having Seniors' real needs, in all their diversity, considered equally to those of other Canadians - *Security*...Having adequate income as one ages, and having access to a safe and supportive living environment	23.1 Agreed as per Recommendation 25, Policy Framework.	March, 2003	Health and Social Services
Recommendation 24- Policy framework The Working Group recommends that the GNWT adopt a policy framework to the development of seniors programs, as outlined in the model described on page 21 of the report.	24.1 Develop policy framework applicable to all GNWT programs and services for seniors. Submit for Cabinet approval	March, 2003	Health and Social Services

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Recommendation 25 - Employment The Working Group recommends that the GNWT identify solutions to the employment and lifestyle problems experienced by some seniors in the NWT, and those approaching their senior years who have difficulty maintaining employment	25.1 Assess the difficulties faced by older workers in the NWT and adjust current programming to respond to their needs. 25.2 Collaborate with federal government on employment initiatives for near-seniors	March, 2003	Education, Culture and Employment
Recommendation 26 - Volunteerism The Working Group recommends that the GNWT continue to work with community organizations to encourage the role of volunteerism in communities and to enhance the participation of all members of society in supporting elderly persons.	26.1 Committee of officials for seniors' programs develop a workplan to implement this recommendation. Workplan should link with the NWT "Volunteer Strategy"	December, 2002	Interdepartmental Committee on Seniors Programs
Recommendation 27 - Community Participation The Working Group recommends that GNWT departments increase their collaboration with the NWT Seniors Advisory Council and other existing seniors' organizations to identify ways to include and integrate seniors into the affairs and life of the community and society within which they reside	27.1 Encourage department to facilitate regular meetings with community seniors organizations.	Ongoing	Interdepartmental Committee for Seniors' programs
Recommendation 28 – Transportation The Working Group recommends the importance for all concerned parties to identify and fund transportation options in those communities where transportation is a barrier to seniors participating in the activities of daily living	28.1 Examine transportation issues and prepare options that may assist communities.	December 2002	Interdepartmental Committee for Seniors' Programs